

Message Text

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ORIGIN PA-02

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 PRS-01 SSO-00 CCO-00 /019 R

DRAFTED BY PA/M:MDROKEY:MDR

APPROVED BY PA:WDYESS

S/S - MR. SEBASTIAN

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O 012011Z APR 77 ZFF4

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

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NO. 21 FOR CARTER FROM PA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT CHICAGO TRIBUNE EDITORIAL FRIDAY
APRIL 1 HEADED "THE SOVIETS RUN TRUE TO FORM."

2. SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE SAID BEFORE HE WENT TO MOSCOW
THAT HE EXPECTED NO ARMS AGREEMENT TO BE REACHED DURING HIS
STAY THERE, AND HE IS COMING HOME WITH HIS EXPECTATIONS
REALIZED. HE SAYS HE IS DISAPPOINTED, BUT HE SURELY IS NOT
SURPRISED. NEITHER SHOULD PRESIDENT CARTER BE.

3. THERE WAS LITTLE CHANCE THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD JUMP AT
EITHER OF THE PROPOSALS WHICH MR. VANCE TOOK TO MOSCOW.
ONE OF THEM RESEMBLED A PROPOSAL MADE A YEAR AGO BY THE FORD
ADMINISTRATION AND REJECTED THEN. IT CALLED FOR SIGNING A
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SALT II AGREEMENT REFLECTING THE TERMS ACCEPTED BY FORMER
PRESIDENT FORD AND CHAIRMAN BREZHNEV IN 1974 AND FOR LEAVING
TO FUTURE DISCUSSION THE STICKY QUESTION OF THE AMERICAN
CRUISE MISSILE AND THE SOVIET BACKFIRE BOMBER. THE SOVIETS
DIDN'T LIKE THAT ARRANGEMENT LAST YEAR, AND THEY DON'T LIKE
IT THIS YEAR.

4. THE SECOND PROPOSAL WAS NOVEL AND COMPLEX. IT CALLED FOR A SHARP REDUCTION BELOW VLADIVOSTOK LEVELS FOR STRATEGIC WEAPONS LAUNCHERS. THE VLADIVOSTOK ACCORD CALLED FOR A CEILING OF 2,400 DELIVERY SYSTEMS FOR EACH SIDE, WITH 1,320 OF THEM MIRVED (MULTIWARHEAD) INTERCONTINENTAL MISSILES. MR. CARTER SUGGESTED SLASHING BOTH OF THESE FIGURES, PERHAPS BY A QUARTER (SPECIFIC FIGURES WERE NOT DISCLOSED).

5. THE U.S. PROPOSAL FURTHER CALLED FOR FREEZING THE TWO SIDES' MOST ADVANCED MISSILES AT ROUGHLY 500 APIECE, FOR HALTING TESTS AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEW WEAPONS SYSTEMS, AND FOR ABOLISHING MOBILE MISSILES (WHICH IN SALT JARGON MEANS MISSILES THAT CAN BE LAUNCHED FROM MOBILE LAND FACILITIES). THE PROPOSAL IS BREATHTAKING IN SCOPE AND NOT AT ALL THE SIMPLE KIND OF PACKAGE WHICH THE SOVIETS COULD ABSORB--MUCH LESS ACCEPT--IN A FEW DAYS. A PROFOUND CHANGE LIKE THIS REQUIRES PROLONGED STUDY AND DISCUSSION. SALT I, FOR EXAMPLE, EMERGED ONLY AFTER MONTHS OF NEGOTIATION.

6. SO THE END OF THE VANCE MISSION LEAVES US NO WORSE OFF THAN WE WERE BEFORE; MR. VANCE THINKS THERE WAS A SLIGHT GAIN. IF THE SOVIETS WERE TESTING MR. CARTER TO SEE IF HE WOULD COME THROUGH WITH A SOFT-HEADED BONUS FOR THE RUSSIANS (SUCH AS GIVING UP OUR CRUISE MISSILE) IN EXCHANGE FOR A QUICK AGREEMENT, THEY KNOW NOW THAT THEY ARE DEALING WITH A TOUGHER MAN THAN THAT.

7. THERE IS NO SIGN THAT THE SOVIET REJECTION STEMS FROM INDIGNATION OVER WHAT MR. CARTER HAS SAID ABOUT SOVIET UNCLASSIFIED

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HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. AS MR. VANCE NOTED, MR. BREZHNEV KEPT THE TWO MATTERS SEPARATE: ONE DAY HE TALKED ABOUT RIGHTS BUT NOT ABOUT SALT; ON ANOTHER DAY HE TALKED ABOUT SALT BUT NOT RIGHTS. THUS, HE SEEMED TO SHARE THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S VIEW THAT THE TWO ISSUES CAN BE TREATED INDEPENDENTLY.

8. NOR DID THE TALKS "COLLAPSE," AS SOME NEWS ACCOUNTS WOULD HAVE IT. MR. VANCE HAD GONE TO MOSCOW EXPECTING TO MEET WITH THE RUSSIANS THROUGH WEDNESDAY, AND THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED. HE IS STILL SCHEDULED TO MEET IN MAY WITH SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO. WHAT IS MORE, EIGHT SOVIET-AMERICAN WORKING GROUPS ARE SOON TO BEGIN EFFORTS ON RELATED MATTERS SUCH AS CURBS ON NUCLEAR TESTS AND ON THE SALE OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS.

9. BUT THE GREATEST HOPE FOR FUTURE AGREEMENT PROBABLY LIES IN MR. CARTER'S OWN TOUGH REACTION TO THE ALLEGED COLLAPSE OF THE VANCE MISSION. HE SAID THAT IF THE SOVIETS

DON'T SHOW GOOD FAITH IN FUTURE TALKS, HE WILL "BE FORCED TO CONSIDER" SPEEDING UP U.S. WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT. THIS IS

THE SORT OF TALK THE KREMLIN UNDERSTANDS AND TO WHICH IT FREQUENTLY RESPONDS IN A DESIRABLE WAY (WHEN PRESIDENT KENNEDY GROWLED, KRUSCHEV PULLED HIS MISSILES OUT OF CUBA).

10. MUCH DEPENDS, THEN, ON WHETHER THE SOVIETS REGARD MR. CARTER'S REACTION AS A REAL THREAT OR A BLUFF--AND THIS IN TURN DEPENDS LARGELY ON CONGRESS. THOSE MEMBERS WHO HAVE OPPOSED THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW WEAPONS PROGRAMS MUST BE MADE TO UNDERSTAND, AS MR. CARTER SEEMS TO UNDERSTAND, THAT A WILLINGNESS TO GO AHEAD WITH THESE PROGRAMS MAY BE THE BEST MEANS OF BRINGING ABOUT AN AGREEMENT WHICH WILL MAKE THEM UNNECESSARY.

11. THE PUBLIC, WITH ITS OBVIOUS SUPPORT FOR A STRONG UNCLASSIFIED

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DEFENSE AND WITH ITS ENTHUSIASM FOR MR. CARTER'S STERN LINE ON HUMAN RIGHTS, SEEMS TO UNDERSTAND BETTER THAN MANY CONGRESSMEN THE REALITIES OF SUPERPOWER RELATIONSHIPS. IT WOULD BE A SAD MISTAKE IF MR. CARTER'S STANCE WERE TO BE UNDERMINED BY SLASHES IN HIS DEFENSE BUDGET OR BY AN AVERSION TO NEW WEAPONS. WE ARE ENGAGED IN A BATTLE OF WILL AS MUCH AS OF WEAPONRY. CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, PRESS COMMENTS, SALT (ARMS CONTROL)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 01-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE071956
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MDROKEY:MDR
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770113-0604
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770497/aaaadgll.tel
Line Count: 147
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c8938bab-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN PA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2923600
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS MATERIAL
TAGS: SOPN, OVIP, PARM, US, UR, CHICAGO TRIBUNE, (VANCE, CYRUS R)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c8938bab-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009